

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2022

CITY OF DURHAM OFFICE ON YOUTH

We took some time to pause and reflect on all that made 2022 such a great year for us. We continued to stay true to our values and our commitments to Durham's youth. We stayed consistent through and through, and stood on the strong foundation we laid in years prior. As we continue to deepen our relationships and impact, we look forward to carrying the torch into 2023.

So here are our TOP SIX HIGHLIGHTS OF 2022!

FEBRUARY 2023



DURHAM'S YOUTH LISTENING PROJECT

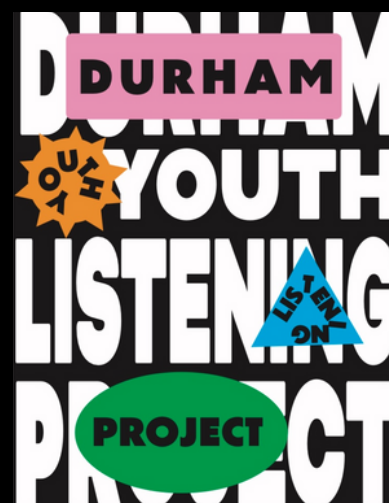
"THE WORK THAT DON'T STOP"

The **Youth Listening Project** (YLP) report was released in 2021, and our work on the report's **30 recommendations** is far from over! We had many focused conversations, training sessions, and presentations about the YLP process and recommendations, and how to get involved. Our goals were to energize people, find ways to work together on shared priorities, and grow partnerships, and we did a lot of that in 2022!

We also continued responding to what young people said about **youth leadership**. Much more on that in our other highlights!

Our focus on other recommendations took the form of being involved in community initiatives, such as: **Protecting Our Dignity in Education** (coalition work focused on creating liberatory, joy-filled, and healing spaces for Black and Brown youth); and the **Whole Schools Movement** (focused on access to better mental health for young people in Durham Public Schools).

Read the report at
bit.ly/youthspeakdurm



WHAT'S NEXT?

In 2023, we'll keep the same energy. We'll work to be accountable to what we heard from young people during the **YLP**, and what we continue to hear from young people. And we'll stay responsive to the needs and dreams of our community as we set our priorities.

2 CHANGED BY YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

"READY, SET LAUNCH"

The **Changed by Youth (CBY) ambassador program** closed out its inaugural year with a bang in 2022! In the first year of CBY, we recruited 11 ambassadors to serve as paid youth consultants on various City, County, and community projects. We worked with our partners to set up new opportunities for young people to be in leadership and consulting roles. We supported ambassadors with training and skill building for **25 new roles**! More on that in highlight 5.

Ambassadors are also tasked with planning an end of term community offering for other young people in Durham, and last year's was a Mental Health Week in May! About 100 young people came out and enjoyed the week's events, which included conversations about mental health between young people and their families; a nature hike centering joy and reflection; and a movie night with conversations about family dynamics.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The second CBY term launched in fall 2022, but not before we reflected on year one and made the needed tweaks to the program. Additional funds from Durham County allowed us to expand our second cohort to **15 ambassadors**!

Ambassadors closed out 2022 deep in building relationships and skills, prepping to work on several new City, County, and community projects, and starting to dream up their community offering. Stay tuned for what they'll bring in 2023!





THE DURHAM YOUTH LEADERSHIP FUND

"TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAMWORK"

The Durham Youth Leadership Fund (DYLF) is a new community grants program that puts resources towards community partners working to advance YLP recommendations and build a dream Durham for young people. In its first year, a total of **\$136,000 was awarded to 13 grantees** who kicked off their programs in fall 2021. They focused on youth leadership, welcoming and supportive spaces, and emergency COVID-19 response.

In late 2022, grantees wrapped up their projects and we reflected on what we learned and grew together. [A detailed impact report is coming soon!](#) For now, here's a sneak peak of what emerged during the grant year. Grantees:

- Built new, **lasting relationships and partnerships** with each other, other organizations, and young people and their families.
- Shifted how they worked with and related to young people, seeing them as leaders of today and as partners.
- Created **over 35 new paid positions** for youth. Nearly all of these positions - plus the skills and insights young people gained - are here to stay!
- Hosted joy-filled, affirming, celebratory events which were enjoyed by **over 1000 young people** and their families!

WHAT'S NEXT?

We've been sharing our participatory grant-making process with other organizations, and will keep doing more of that in 2023 to hopefully inspire shifts in how funding decisions get made.

Thanks to additional funding from Durham County, we're excited to announce DYLF 2.0 has launched! Youth and community groups are invited to apply.

CHECK OUT
DYLF 2.0
FUNDING AREAS
AND FIND MORE
INFO: [BIT.LY/
DYLF2INFO](https://bit.ly/dyLF2info)



4 ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN DURHAM'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

"SOUNDS LIKE A PLAN"

The **Community Planning team** in the City-County Planning Department has worked to engage community members in a new Comprehensive Plan ("Comp Plan") since 2019, and we've worked alongside them to ensure young people's experiences are reflected in the new plan. The Plan includes recommendations for big decisions that our local government may make about how Durham grows and uses land in the future. Shout out to their team for committing to engage youth in this complex plan!

Last year, we continued supporting youth serving on the Comp Plan Policy Working Groups. When it was time to engage the broader community around the draft policies coming out of these groups, we were there too! We hosted **summer engagement sessions** to hear what young people and Spanish speakers had to say about the policies, and how they needed to be changed. Young people were trained to lead the sessions, and one of the sessions included local muralist, [Kiara Sanders](#), who led participants in painting their dream Durham.



"Crafts and Conversations" engagement

WHAT'S NEXT?

In 2023, we'll be working with the team to support additional engagement sessions with young people to share out the full plan and offer community members guidance for how to get involved throughout the plan adoption process.

Read and comment on the final Comp Plan policies here: engagedurham.com

5 BUILDING SPACES FOR YOUTH LEADERSHIP

"A SPACE TO CALL YOUR OWN"

Our office continues to work within local government and with community organizations to create leadership and decision-making opportunities for young people. We support agencies in shaping new spaces for youth-adult partnerships, and we connect and support young people in their roles.



IN 2022, WE HELPED CREATE OVER 75 NEW DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE!

In addition to DYLF, projects included: working with Kids Voting Durham to develop a candidate guide for Durham's 2022 elections; serving on an advisory team for a new aquatics center being planned by Durham Parks and Recreation; serving on and co-chairing the Whole Schools Advisory Team; working with the Community Development Department on the Point in Time Count for youth experiencing homelessness; and working with the Protecting Our Dignity in Education coalition to develop an action plan. We also supported new youth seats on: Durham's Racial Equity Commission, Food Security Network Steering Committee, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC).

It's deeper than just connecting young people to these new spaces - we also want them to grow their skills and power while they're there. So, we took the time to make sure they felt good showing up and were able to navigate the spaces with ease. In 2023, we'll keep on keepin' on, creating spaces for young people to be leaders and change-makers in Durham.



GROWTH IN THE OFFICE ON YOUTH

"SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE"



"Throughout the past several years we've moved with intention, and trust - taking our time to grow and sustain relationships, partnerships, and our team."

In 2022, we renewed our commitments to Durham for at least 10 more years through a new [Interlocal Agreement](#) (ILA) between the City and Durham County! The ILA spells out some key priorities for youth initiatives work in Durham, and gives us all a blueprint for building youth engagement, enhancing youth services, and celebrating young people. The ILA brought some funding along with it that has allowed us to expand the CBY program, launch another round of DYLF, and expand our team. We're still celebrating this huge win for Durham!

To that end, late last year we welcomed the newest member of our team, [Atigré Farmer](#), as our new Communications Coordinator! Atigré will be engaging young people and connecting them to resources in whole new ways that are fresh and engaging. Super excited to have her on board a part of the #OOYsquad! Check us out on Twitter and IG [@youthspeakDURM](#) to see what's up!



We're grateful for this growth and the commitments and trust our community and City and County leadership have made to us. We'll work to keep sustaining and keep growing in 2023 and beyond!

Final Reflections

If you've made it this far, you're a real one!

In 2022 we kept watering seeds that were previously planted in years past! We continued to center relationships with each other which ultimately supported us in sustaining relationships in our community. We celebrated one another and made sure to back each other's growth.

That's the same goal for us in 2023 - keep backing each other's personal growth while actively working towards a dream Durham for young people! As always, we thank you all for your love and support. It truly keeps us real and keeps us going!

We can't wait to see all the exciting things that will emerge in 2023 for us all!

*Much Love
The Office on Youth Team*

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durhamnc.gov/OfficeOnYouth



OFFICE ON YOUTH
City Manager
CITY OF DURHAM

